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Central Intelligence Bulletin

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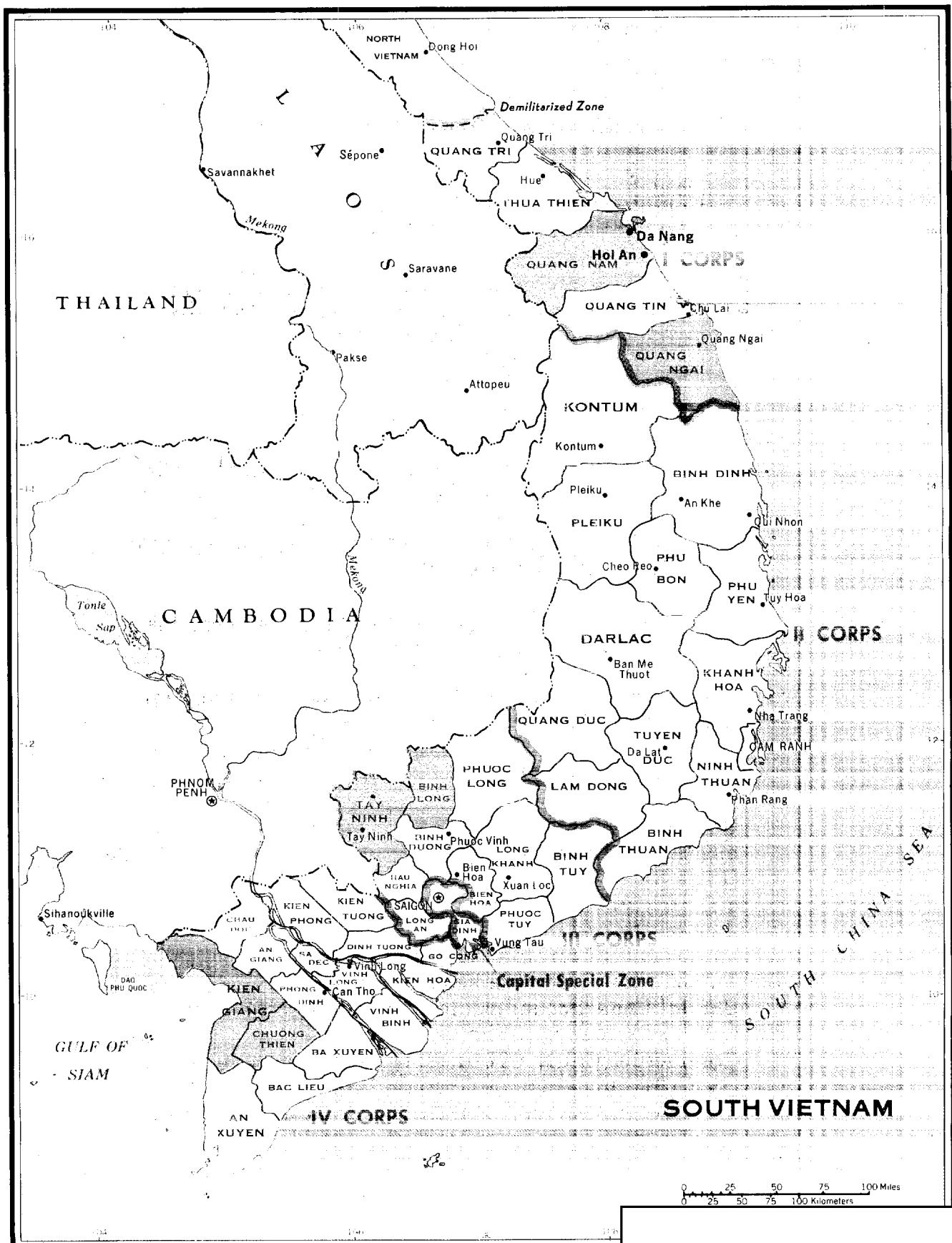
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***Vietnam: (Information as of 4:30 AM EDT)**

Military Situation in South Vietnam: The pace of military action stepped up in widely scattered areas of South Vietnam during the last several days.

Enemy action was highlighted by the 122-mm. rocket attack on the Da Nang air base on 15 July which caused US casualties of eight killed and 175 wounded and resulted in damage to 58 US aircraft.

Two hours earlier an enemy force had assaulted the provincial jail--located 14 miles southeast of Da Nang in the provincial capital of Hoi An. The attackers wore Vietnamese Army uniforms and unit insignia and presumably were able to gain the advantage of surprise and sow confusion among the jail's defenders. Approximately 960 of the nearly 1,200 prisoners freed by the Communists are still at large.

Elsewhere in I Corps, US naval ships, after a four-day surveillance of a suspicious trawler, intercepted the trawler as it entered South Vietnam's territorial waters off Quang Ngai Province. After a running firefight, the trawler was run aground and then seized by Korean troops, who have removed 1,192 weapons from the ship. The ship, now at Chu Lai, also contained 712,869 rounds of mostly 7.62-mm. ammunition, six tons of explosives, and assorted other ammunition.

In II, III, and IV Corps, Communist forces launched a number of attacks on troop bivouac positions and military outposts, and directed harassing fire into several government administrative headquarters. On the morning of 15 July an outpost was overrun in Tay Ninh Province with heavy losses to the defenders. Also on the 15th, a 15-truck convoy of the Vietnamese Army was ambushed in the IV Corps province of Chuong Thien less than one mile from the provincial capital. Over the last several

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days, government administrative headquarters have been hit by mortar fire in such widely separated areas as Binh Long and Kien Giang Provinces. (Map)

Political Developments in South Vietnam: The Central Election Council recommended on 15 July that General Duong Van Minh's presidential slate be disqualified.

In forwarding its recommendations on the presidential slates to the Provisional National Assembly's special committee on elections, the council advised that Minh's running mate, Tran Ngoc Lieng, had once held French citizenship and that the ticket should therefore be disqualified. Although the council's recommendations are not binding, the special committee and the full assembly may follow the council's lead. By making Lieng, rather than Minh, the victim, the council has given the government and the assembly a means of removing a thorn in their sides without the danger of making a martyr of Minh personally.

According to a member of the special committee, the council also recommended the disqualification of eight other slates, including that of peace candidate Au Truong Thanh.

[redacted] the committee will follow the council's recommendations on all the slates when it forwards its own recommendations to the full assembly on 18 July.

Premier Ky, in Da Lat for a series of weekend meetings with his political advisers, told [redacted] that he planned to discuss with them the composition of the future cabinet and that he was also reviewing the senate slates to select six which the government could support. He will present the six slates to the generals in Saigon on 17 July for their approval, and the government will then begin its active support of them.

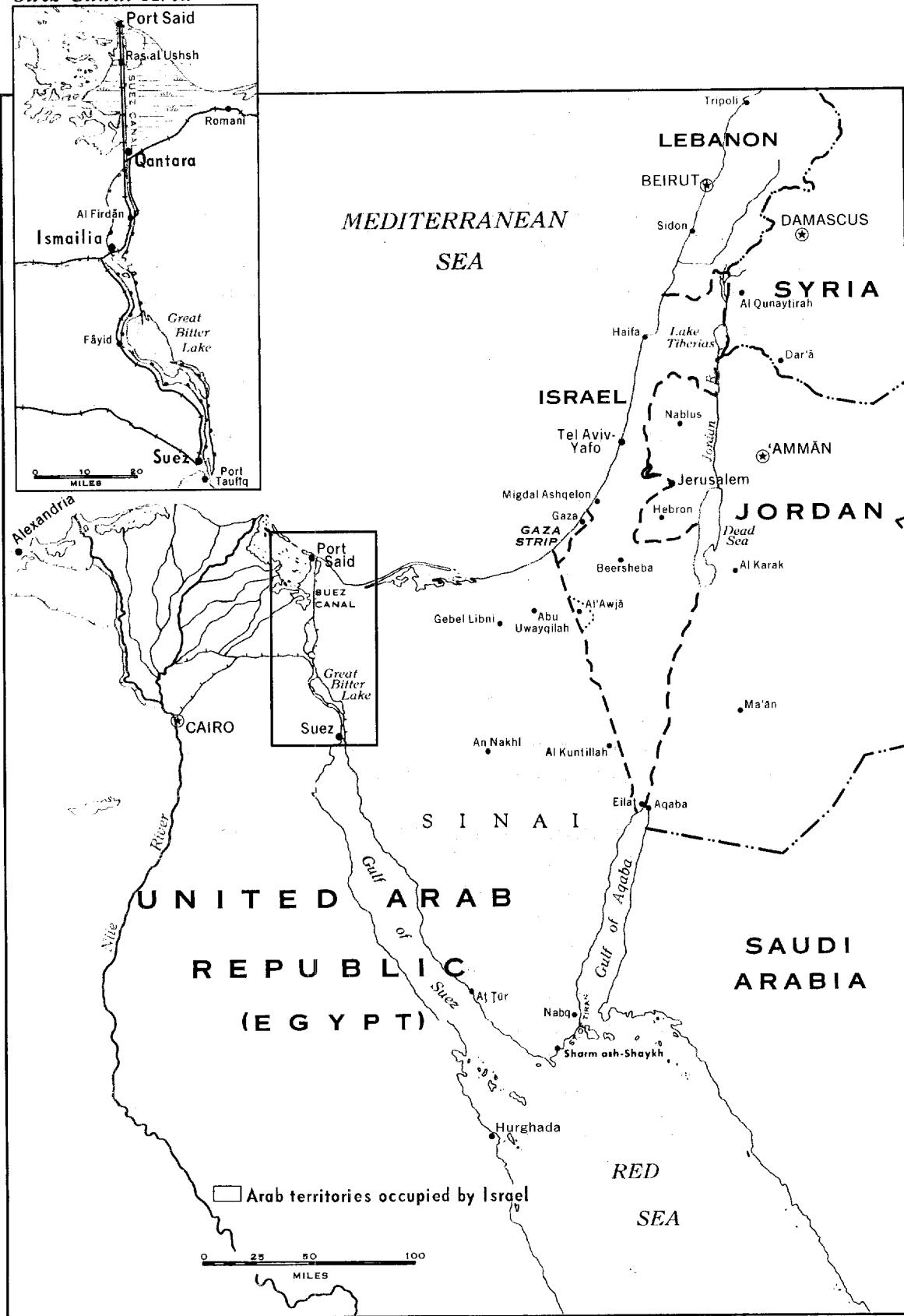
In addition, Ky told [redacted] that he intended to meet in Da Lat on the 16th with approximately 100 provincial police chiefs and security officials to give them instructions on how the elections are to be held and what the

role of the police should be. Ky is downgrading the role of Police Director Loan, asserting that Loan has been instructed to "keep his mouth shut" on political subjects. Loan's statements and actions on political matters, Ky said, "should not be taken as definitive." [redacted]

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Suez Canal Area



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17 Jul 67 CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE BULLETIN Map

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Arab States - Israel: Military clashes along the Suez Canal were halted Saturday night as UN observer teams prepared to move into the canal area.

The fighting along the canal on 14 and 15 July was the heaviest since the original June cease-fire. Israeli spokesmen claim to have downed six Egyptian jets on 15 July and admit to losing one Mirage fighter. Cairo claims to have inflicted heavy losses on Israeli forces and admits only one aircraft loss. The Israeli figures are probably more accurate, although there is no evidence at present on the extent of damage inflicted by either side.

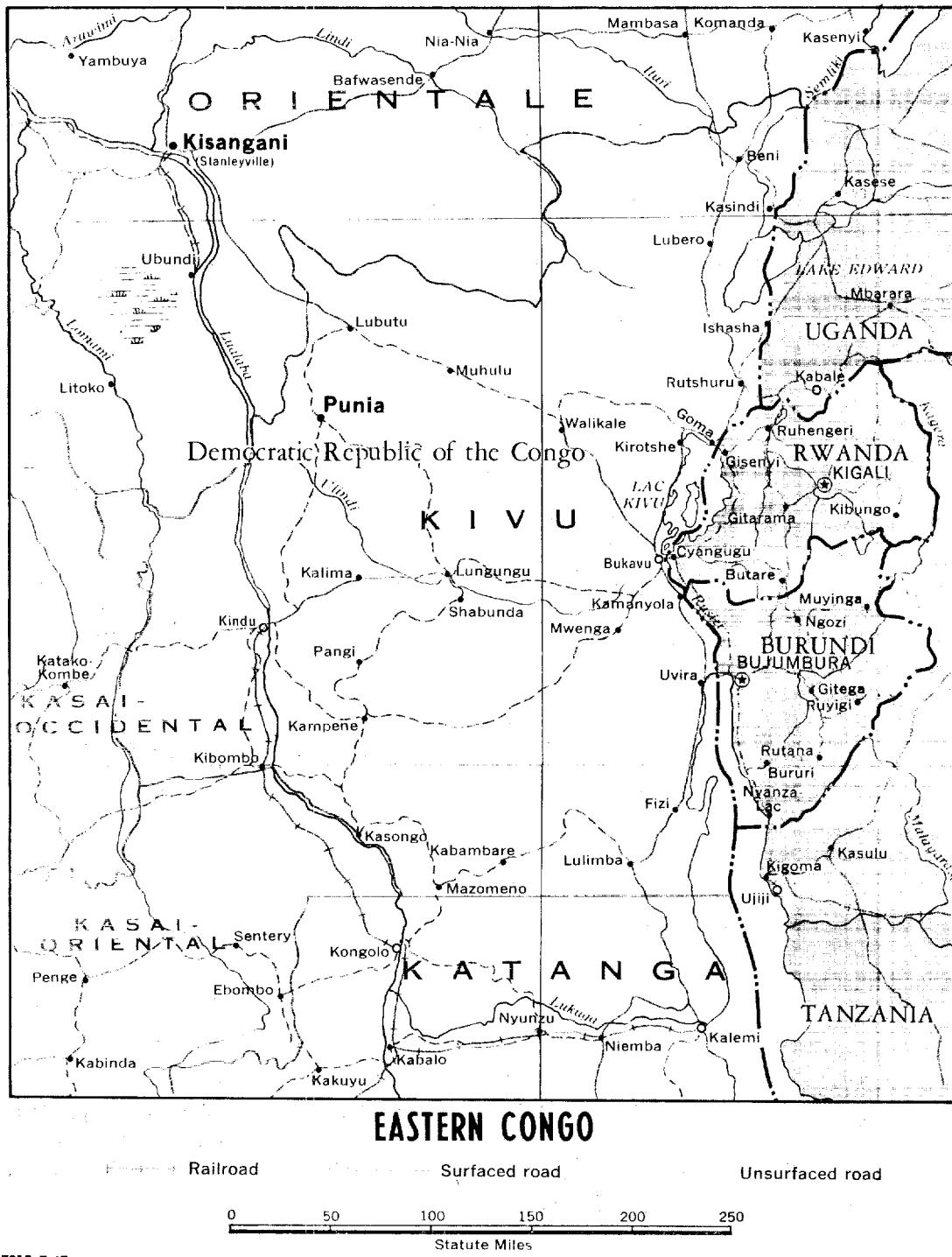
A series of smaller clashes also occurred on 15 July along the Jordan River between Jordanian and Israeli forces.

*UN observer teams had been expected to establish their positions on both sides of the canal yesterday, but the UN's chief observer has announced this is being delayed pending clarification of Egypt's position.

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Congo (Kinshasa): The evacuation of foreigners desiring to leave Kisangani (formerly Stanleyville) at this time has been completed.

Three aircraft--two Red Cross planes and a US C-130--flew a total of 236 Congolese and foreigners from Kisangani to Kinshasa on 14 July. Some 30 to 100 Europeans who remain in the city say they want to stay at least for a few days, but most probably will want to be evacuated if the situation does not improve. Two US missionaries apparently intend to remain indefinitely.

Embassy officers describe Kisangani as a dead city. Looting by Congolese soldiers and civilians has occurred on an unprecedented scale. The Congolese in general are hostile to most foreigners. Congolese civilians are suffering from the army's brutality. Embassy officers believe that most of the foreigners who sparked the city's comeback after earlier periods of turmoil have left for good this time.

The rebels who left Kisangani on 12 July probably have stopped in the Punia area. It now appears that they do have some European but no American hostages. The US Embassy in Kinshasa reports that Italian technicians have sent word that "their safety depends on getting airplanes to take out the mercenaries." [redacted] the rebels, who are now on familiar ground where the populace is favorable to them, could hold out for years if necessary.

The deep distrust between the Congo and Belgium will make any substantial rapprochement extremely difficult despite President Mobutu's conciliatory newspaper article of 15 July. The obvious inability of any Congolese government to guarantee the safety of Europeans in times of stress will probably lead Brussels to cut back on the personnel it sends to the Congo. [redacted]

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United Kingdom: The British Government plans to announce tomorrow its intention to withdraw its military forces from Singapore and Malaysia by the mid-1970s.

This announcement will form the core of a Supplementary Defense White Paper to be presented to Parliament. Efforts of the Australian, New Zealand, Malaysian, Singapore, and US governments to change or at least delay the decision have succeeded only in getting London to make the withdrawal contingent on conditions prevailing in South Asia by the 1970s.

The defense package will include elements which London hopes will soften the blow to the Southeast Asian Commonwealth countries. The most important of these is a reiteration of London's intention to keep some forces in the general area indefinitely to support its security commitment to Singapore and Malaysia. The British, however, are not sure how they will accomplish this.

The White Paper will again mention the possibility of using facilities in Australia and the Indian Ocean islands, but British interest in such facilities has declined because of cost considerations and growing domestic opposition to any military presence in Southeast Asia.

The White Paper will not specify major cuts in other parts of the world. It will, however, announce forthcoming reductions in total force levels and military spending. British forces will be cut from the 1965 level of 423,600 to about 383,600 by the end of 1971. The present financial target of a \$5.6-billion military budget by 1969-70 will be reduced by \$280 million.

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